

Is it a Church or a Business

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Jesus said that the house of God should be a place of worship and not a marketplace.

John 2:16

And He said to those who sold doves, “Take these things away! Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!”

There are some people who would say Jesus was not against the selling but the fact that they were overcharging the people. Then why was he also kicking out of the temple those who bought.

Matthew 21:12

Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves.

Buyers was also seen as offensive to God as those who sold.

But yet in the time we are living we are seeing more of a business of selling in the churches than anything else. Preachers won’t come to preach in your church without a set salary out front. It is sad how there are many great preachers who are men and women of God who won’t charge a cent for a men or women seminar. But these are pushed to the side to hire those of well known name who charges for their speech which by the way has to be examine to see if it is really the word of God being preached which they quote from their mouth. Events like Seminars are being conducted in churches for a 5, 10, 15, 20 dollar fee. After service don’t forget the church has a restaurant, a coffee shop, a book store and even dancing classes all for a price.

Peter states it well when he say in the last days they will make money out of you in the church.

2 Peter 2:1-3 states in the NLT

But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them. In this way, they will bring sudden destruction on themselves. Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money. But God condemned them long ago, and their destruction will not be delayed.

Notice In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money.

I remember being locked in a Spanish pentecostal church by a pastor named Glanado who said no one is leaving here till we collect 5,000 dollars for school in Dominican Republic and we accept food stamps. Or the time I was in a church and the preacher named Benicio Molina said I received a vision that someone here has 1,000 dollars to give , don't leave without giving it or you be dead tonight. Money drives these devil worshippers. Or give a 500, or 777 dollar pledge and you will see a miracle. Or think of the Men , Woman , youth, children church Society which each member has to give a donation of 5 or 10 dallors weekly.

The Didache which was written somewhere around 100 AD chapter 11 states (” But whosoever shall say in a spirit give “me money ” or something else,” you shall not listen to them....

And brother and sisters these people are saying these words in a spirit which is not the Spirit of God.

We are not to be making money for the work which God has freely given to the church.

Yes a preacher or pastor is to get a offering for the work they do.

1 Corinthians 9:11-14

If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.

Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.

I am not saying that churches shouldn't collect offerings but it should not be collected in the way it is seen in many churches now in days. It should not be a burden to the congregation to give it by being forced to. In matter of fact if you are in need you shouldn't give.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.

And it should only be collected on Sunday the first day of the week.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

Notice Paul doesn't mention numbers but states lay aside something.

When Moses was asking the people of Israel for materials for the temple which the people gave so much, they had to tell the people to stop giving, did Moses start by telling them we need this much. No, he just ask them to give the materials which was needed and God touched the hearts to give.

Exodus 35:4-9

And Moses spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, "This is the thing which the Lord commanded, saying:

'Take from among you an offering to the Lord. Whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as an offering to the Lord: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats' hair; ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate.

Exodus 35:29 The children of Israel brought a freewill offering to the Lord, all the men and women whose hearts were willing to bring material for all kinds of work which the Lord, by the hand of Moses, had commanded to be done.

Exodus 36:4-7

Then all the craftsmen who were doing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work he was doing, and they spoke to Moses, saying, "The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the Lord commanded us to do." So Moses gave a commandment, and they

caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, “Let neither man nor woman do any more work for the offering of the sanctuary.” And the people were restrained from bringing, for the material they had was sufficient for all the work to be done—indeed too much.

Is it lack of faith that causes you to set a number in the offering collected. If it is then it is sin.

Romans 14:23

But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.

We are not to set numbers in our collection. Like We are to collect this much today and if it is not received let's pass the collection plate again till we receive the amount we want. Don't put a price on the work of God.

Acts 8:18-23

And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money,

saying, “Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit.” But Peter said to him, “Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity.”

The Story of Naaman is a wonderful story but have you ever read what happened afterwards Elisha refuse to receive a reward for the work of God. But his servant Gehazi in greed wanted to put a price for the work of God.

2 Kings 5:15-27

And he returned to the man of God, he and all his aides, and came and stood before him; and he said, “Indeed, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, except in Israel; now therefore, please take a gift from your servant.” But he said, “As the Lord lives, before whom I stand, I will receive nothing.” And he urged him to take it, but he refused.

So Naaman said, “Then, if not, please let your servant be given two mule-loads of earth; for your servant will no longer offer either burnt offering or sacrifice to other gods, but to the Lord. Yet in this thing may the Lord pardon your servant: when my master goes into the temple of Rimmon to worship there, and he leans on my hand, and I bow down in the temple of Rimmon—when I bow down in the temple of Rimmon, may the Lord please pardon your servant in this thing.” Then he said to him, “Go in peace.” So he departed from him a short distance. Gehazi’s Greed But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, “Look, my master has spared Naaman this Syrian, while not receiving from his hands what he brought; but as the Lord lives, I will run after him and take something from him.” So Gehazi pursued Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he got down from the chariot to meet him, and said, “Is all well?” And he said, “All is well. My master has sent me, saying, ‘Indeed, just now two young men of the sons of the prophets have come to me from the mountains of Ephraim. Please give them a talent of silver and two changes of garments.’” So Naaman said, “Please, take two talents.” And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and handed them to two of his servants; and they carried them on ahead of him. When he came to the citadel, he took them from their hand, and stored them away in the house; then he let the men go, and they departed. Now he went in and stood before his master. Elisha said to him, “Where did you go, Gehazi?” And he said, “Your servant did not go anywhere.” Then he said to him, “Did not my heart go with you when the man turned back from his chariot to meet you? Is it time to receive money and to receive clothing, olive groves and vineyards, sheep and oxen, male and female servants? Therefore the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever.” And he went out from his presence leprous, as white as snow.

God's work doesn't come at a price

We read the story of the widow who gave her last mite as inspiration to give. But this story shouldn't be read that way she was a victim. Of a religious society of priests and Jewish leaders who took widows money and left them in the streets to beg. Jesus when pointing at her , he didn't say she was bless when she gave , he pronounced judgement at the Temple for taking advantage of the widows. Let's read this passage in it's context knowing full well that when the Bible was written it wasn't written with verses and chapters starting where it begins in Luke 20:45 -21:6

Luke 20:45-47

Then, in the hearing of all the people, He said to His disciples, "Beware of the scribes, who desire to go around in long robes, love greetings in the marketplaces, the best seats in the synagogues, and the best places at feasts, who devour widows' houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation."

Luke 21:1-6

And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, "These things which you see—the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down."

Notice What was the scribes sin "who devour widows' houses,"

At that time a scribe would ask a widow if he could stay in her house and be supported by her and in exchange he would pray for her and her family in long prayers. Once the scribe took all she had , he would pronounce a curse

on her. And as these corrupted scribes we're so we're the priest of the Temple.

Now what did the widow give ? She put in all the livelihood that she had.” A widow had no husband to provide for her.

There is no promise that when she was to go home she would now be greeted with financial security. No she was to starve while those who worked in the Temple lived as rich men. And admiring the gold that was in between the bricks of the temple. So Jesus pronounces right after that the Temple's destruction.

Then, as some spoke of the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and donations, He said, “These things which you see—the days will come in which not one stone shall be left upon another that shall not be thrown down.”

No wonder these preachers like T.D.Jakes and Joel Osteen are giving classes how to be a good business man. For that is what they do .

Just recently I read a article by Amos Johnson Jr “9 Business lessons I learned from Bishop TD Jakes”

Are they preachers or are they business men. Some people get upset when names are mentioned but names needs to be mentioned for how can one know who they are if they are not mentioned? Are we to say there is a wolf in Sheep clothing and not to mention who is the wolf that has the disguise.

Paul mentioned names of false teachers

1 Timothy 1:18-20

This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Notice Paul mentions Hymenaeus and Alexander as false teachers

John mentioned names of false brethren

3 John 1:9-10

I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church.

Anyway that could be a other topic I could write about in a other time.